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and partly because it reveals the difficulty involved in all discussions of political theory, that of the unfixity of fundamental terms, here the uncertainty as to the meaning of the term state. The pluralists make their point by emptying the concept of all but geographical content and then have no difficulty in opposing to it, as functionally different, the organizations of special interest, although, as a matter of fact, they are finally forced to recognize that as geographically conditioned these groups are related and that there is a good of the whole not provided for in the good of the parts. Since, however, the geographical group is the only universal group, comprising as it does the members of all groups, its own members, therefore, embodying the greatest variety of concrete and complex interests, it is hard to see why it is necessary to discard the state and recognize a new unity called organized or federalized society to be the bearer of the ultimate sovereignty. The possible improvement of political representation by the recognition of groups or guilds would seem a matter of governmental detail and not of special significance for the theory of sovereignty.

My conclusion then is, that the attempt to establish the theory of plural sovereignty, whether by proof of the actual failure of the state to maintain itself as against other organizations, or by evidence of the functional differences and coordination of groups within a given geographical area, fails because of its lack of recognition of the necessary demand for unity in the life of reason as well as by the arbitrariness of its limitations of the function of the state. Of course, one may escape from the state and its sovereignty by taking refuge in anarchy, just as one may avoid rational self control by giving rein to one's impulses, but, so long as one retains the conception of sovereignty at all, its unity in a state seems inevitable.

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IS PLEASURE OBJECTIVE?

M^R. WALLIS attempts, in two recent issues of this JOURNAL (June 5 and July 3), to give, in the interests of ethics, an "objective" definition of "pleasure." Pleasure is "the doing of a thing for its own sake, or, more accurately, that which, all things considered, should be done for its own sake." . . . Such an enterprise should not pass unchallenged, for it is not an isolated phenomenon, but is typical of a widespread contemporary impatience with the subjective, and twisting of psychological terms to behavioristic meanings. May I enter a demurrer?

1. Even granting that such concepts are more useful for ethics than that of "pleasure" in the old sense, it is too bad to confuse matters by adopting the old word for the new idea. Those of us who are not blessed with the behaviorist's blind spot seem to find a certain *quality* in our experience, of extraordinary interest, that we call "pleasure." Even supposing this quality never to be experienced except when we do things for their own sake, yet by the word "pleasure" we mean something other than the doing. To hold that this quality of experience really is the same thing as the activity in question is perhaps an arguable theory. But certainly until that theory is proved it would be misleading to call both things by the same name; while to deny that what people generally have meant by the word is a legitimate object of discourse would require still more elaborate argument. It is an interesting suggestion, that right and wrong really analyze down to activities-for-their-own-sake, instead of to activities-that-seek-pleasure-and-avoid-pain. But why confuse a discussion by stealing your opponents' word? Especially when theirs is the common usage of men?

2. Mr. Wallis's two definitions are, of course, quite incompatible. What I take him to mean, however, is that activity done for its own sake is *called* pleasure, thought of as pleasure, whereas only that which *should* be done for its own sake is *really* pleasure. That is, having taken the term at first in a physiological-psychological sense, he ends by using it as an ethical concept. This is blurring meanings still further, when what we need is discrimination. Surely his argument would be clearer if he would use for this ethical meaning the term "the morally good," or "the right."

3. It is this ethical use of "pleasure" which gives meaning to his statement that "the experience in the past adjudged a pleasure must, perforce, be readjudged in the light of this larger knowledge as less of a pleasure, or as no pleasure at all." The past experience can be adjudged to be bad, morally. But that judgment can not alter the fact that it was pleasant (in the usual sense, or in his own first sense) at the time when it was felt. If it was felt as a keen pleasure, then no moral disparagement can make that earlier rating untrue. That is to say, there are two standards of rating, the psychological rating, *qua* pleasure, and the ethical rating, *qua* morally good. Of course our own rating of the pleasantness of our experiences is, as he says, "not sacredly and invariantly true." We are careless in introspection, quickly forgetful, and highly inaccurate in comparisons between different experiences. But this inaccuracy of judgment as to the degree of pleasantness of an experience has nothing whatever to do with the condemnation of the activity that produced

the experience on moral grounds—*i. e.*, because of its subsequent results. To say that “the greatest pleasure is the realization of life purposes” is to pronounce a moral judgment—to say, namely, what is the *summum bonum*, what we *ought* to take most pleasure in. We do actually, of course, take keen pleasure in activities that thwart our life purposes. It would be an utterly forced use of language, to say that what most conduces to our life purposes is to be *called* “pleasantest.” In other words, the “duality of judgment” is not, as Mr. Wallis would have it, between pleasure and the consciousness of that pleasure; it is between actually felt pleasure and the badness of the pleasurable act because of its *effects* upon *other* moments of experience.

4. But suppose we concede Mr. Wallis the right to use terms in his own way, however unusual. We have, then, for our criterion of right and wrong, instead of feelings of pleasure and pain (which are essentially private and non-measurable, and so an elusive guide) an objective criterion—the degree to which activities forward our life purposes. Here we have at least a “usable,” “workable” concept. . . . But I wonder. Which life purpose is to be preferred? What are we to do when various life purposes conflict? And how shall we determine which of various possible lines of conduct will, in the end, best forward the chosen purpose? And must we ruthlessly turn away from all activities that do not forward that purpose? May not various activities be legitimate and desirable, other than those closely coordinated with a leading purpose? . . . In brief, I raise the question whether the proposed criterion really offers more definite guidance than the hedonistic criterion. After all, it is fairly easy to discover the general effects upon human happiness of various ideals of conduct; we are all much alike, capable of similar joys and griefs. Whatever uncertainty there is (and there is, of course, a good deal) is not to be removed by the discovery of a more “objective” criterion. Life must remain an experimental enterprise. Ethics can never be a hard-and-fast code, but must remain a series of suggestions, competing ideals, revealing unsuspected possibilities to this man, warning that man of pitfalls which others’ experience has found, and bringing up the mass of obviously stupid and shortsighted conduct to the level of the relatively fortunate solutions discovered by the most successful.

5. Finally, the truth that existing “purposes” must be considered in our moral ideal, and not needlessly crossed, and the truth that it is well to have a dominating life purpose, are not the bottom truths of ethics. The question *why* remains. *Why*, ultimately, is it desirable to realize any purposes, rather than to cross them? *Why* a

"life purpose" rather than miscellaneous and transient purposes? What does it *matter* which way of life you choose? The answer, it seems to some of us, is that one road leads, in general, to greater happiness than the other; unless it does, there is no reason for preferring it. In short, we need not only objective clues to wise choice, we need a reason for choosing. In a world without hedonic differences there would be no use at all in having any ethics. The ultimate seat of all value is just this despised subjective, unsharable feeling of pleasure. Unless activities are going to produce that sort of feeling somewhere, in some one, they might as well not go on at all. To eliminate "pleasure" in the common, subjective sense of the term, is to eliminate the motif for ethics.

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REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

The Realities of Modern Science: an introduction for the general reader. JOHN MILLS. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1919. Pp. xi + 327.

This is not a metaphysical inquiry. Philosophically the author is naïvely realistic. The purpose of the book is to give to the "general reader" an initiation into the terminology, and an acquaintance with the favorite entities of contemporary physical chemistry. So far as the author has any further thesis, it seems to be this, that molecules, atoms, and electrons have so frequently and variously been measured, with results so corroborating one another, and explain deductively so much which formerly was only in the status of "empirical" law, that they should now be considered no longer as hypothetical entities or convenient concepts, but as "the realities of science." The general reader to whom this book is addressed should not be too general a reader; preferably he should be a person who knew a considerable amount of physics and chemistry in former days, but has been neglecting them of late, and one, moreover, who can read a mathematical equation and have it mean something to him. Such a reader would indeed profit from what the author has to give him in the second half of this book.

The book, however, is two distinct books in one. The first half is taken up with a general review of science from the ancient Egyptians on down, through Thales and other well-known characters, with a few speculations as to the prehistoric. Even such a sketch, too hurried to be altogether accurate, may be of use to some readers, but scarcely to those who would profit from the rest of the book. After